

2/17/2010



ELISE
TORTORA

MORALITY OF JUSTICE: A MULTIGENRE LOOK AT
KOHLBERG'S THEORIES ON MORAL
DEVELOPMENT

Table of Contents

Preface.....	2
Expository Piece.....	3-6
Diary Entry: April 1935.....	7
Newspaper Article: Kohlberg Body Found.....	8-9
Diary Entry: October 1938.....	10
Comic Strip: Kohlberg's Days in the Principal's Office.....	11
Diary Entry: January 1942.....	12
Movie Poster: <i>Discovery</i>	13
Diary Entry: April 1942.....	14
A Poem: "The Stages of Our Life".....	15-16
Diary Entry: June 1947.....	17
Works Cited.....	18-19

Preface

This is a multigenre project reflecting aspects of the life and work of the theorist, Lawrence Kohlberg.. This project has used the views, research and life of Kohlberg as a base and has also taken creative liberties with portions of information. Through the use of fabricated diary entries, interspersed between other genres, we will go through 5 of the stages of Kohlberg's moral development and have a private view of the reasoning process during these stages of his development. Kohlberg emphasizes that in viewing and determining one's moral development, it should not be based upon his actions or his opinions of what is right or wrong, but rather his reasoning behind his opinions. The other five genres used; an expository essay, a newspaper article, a comic strip, a movie poster, and a poem, all aim to present information which are meant to represent some of the basic theories and opinions of Lawrence Kohlberg.

An Expository View of Lawrence Kohlberg

Lawrence Kohlberg's work in moral development has had a profound effect on the fields of philosophy, psychology and also, education. Kohlberg initially intended to expand upon Piaget's earlier findings on children's moral reasoning. However, through his research, interests and discoveries, he eventually created his own definitions and explanations of the moral stages, which now could be explained in a 3 level, 6 stage process (Hayes, 1994). Kohlberg's stages do not focus upon "right" or "wrong" moral decisions, but rather the "cognitive structures which underlie such content and give it its claim to the category 'moral'" (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977). The concept of justice is emphasized as the primary goal and focus for both moral judgment and moral education because "the most just solution is the one which takes into account the positions or rights of all the individuals involved" (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977, p. 56). According to this theory, universally, all people have the ability to pass through all of the stages. Although there is not a universal "good" or "bad" there is a universal process of thought and moral progression which remains true globally (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977). This paper will first examine the stages which Kohlberg has presented the implications that they have upon the educational system and finally, it will briefly discuss some of the criticism that Kohlberg and his research have received.

Kohlberg's original study, upon which he based his stages of development, consisted of 72 boys in three age groups of 10, 13 and 16. In two-hour tape recorded interviews the boys were presented with hypothetical moral dilemmas and the participants were asked to choose whether one should "perform the obedience-serving act or the need-serving act" (Kohlberg, 1963/2008, p.9). Then, the children were asked a series of questions which aimed at discovering the reasoning behind their responses. Kohlberg's scale is based upon moral thinking not moral action

and the distinction between the two must be noted. Many people can talk or think on a high moral level but that does not imply that they will automatically act or behave on that same moral level. Although, Kohlberg does believe that as the higher stages are reached, there is a stronger correlation between thinking and action (Crain, 1985). In order to understand the basic structure of Kohlberg's stages of moral development the following chart has been provided:

Level	Stage	Description
I.Preconventional: Pre-moral:Self focus	1	<i>Punishment / Obedience:</i> Motivated by fear of punishment, and total deference to authority
	2	<i>The instrumental-relativist orientation:</i> Motivated by what is received by particular choice, scratch my back, I'll scratch yours.
II.Conventional: Morality: Beginning to view others beyond self	3	<i>The interpersonal concordance:</i> Social approval, Motivated by what others "expect", good boy behavior
	4	<i>The "law and order" orientation:</i> societal maintenance, Motivated by keeping of law and social order (similar to 1, although different reasons behind it-based upon moral order
III.Postconventional :Desire to define moral values, Morality of Self-Accepted Moral Principles	5	<i>The Social-Contract:</i> laws that are not just can be changed, based upon whole society's views, what is "right" and law is chosen by all, and if not, can be adjusted
	6	<i>Universal Ethical Principle:</i> it is one's moral responsibility to make societal changes, not concrete. One must respect the dignity of all. Willingness to make changes regardless of personal consequences. (ex: Mother Teresa)

Kohlberg also believes that the stages exist in an "invariant sequence" meaning that there is always a forward movement through the stages and people are not able to skip through stages since in order to reach one stage, a person must have reached the previous one (Crain, 1985; Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977). Additionally, it should be understood that it is through experiences with moral conflicts that people progress through the stages. This does not have to be actual, physical experience, but it could simply be through their mental curiosity (Crain, 1985). Clearly,

it is the ideal goal to reach the highest level of moral development, and Kohlberg also suggests that schools should have more of a part in this development of young students.

Since the purpose of education is to create growth and development within young children, Kohlberg emphasizes the importance of using education to help push students towards more complex ways of reasoning (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977). At the time of his studies, Kohlberg believed that the current school systems were labeling students and keeping them morally in stages 1 or 4, which focused primarily on authority, punishment, rules and order (“Lawrence Kohlberg:”,n.d.). It is not possible to hope for more morally active or morally minded young adults if they are not taught to use their mind for complex reasoning. Therefore, it is up to the teachers and the schools to offer more opportunities for their students to discuss issues, debate complex topics and look at issues from a more global perspective (Kohlberg & Hersh, 1977). If they are simply looking at issues as “right” or “wrong” they are far less likely to progress through the stages and ultimately they will leave school simply knowing what to think and not how to do so.

Although Kohlberg was a highly intelligent and well respected theorist, he was also highly criticized for his work. Some question his claims that the stage theory is universally true and describe his work as culturally biased since his stage model was not tested on non-Western cultures (Crain, 1985). Additionally, Carol Gilligan, an associate and former student of Kohlberg, questions the research based on the fact that the study was male centralized. Since the stages were created based upon data collected only from males, the structure is not true for both sexes. Through Gilligan’s own studies she began to develop her adaptation of the stages for women which focused on the Morality of Care, while Kohlberg’s stages emphasized justice. She

believed that the reason that women were frequently scoring lower on Kohlberg's scale was because women and girls approach moral situations from different perspectives than men and consequently, they react differently to moral dilemmas. She believes that women are more focused on the idea of caring and relationships and since Kohlberg's sequence is based upon male perspective, justice and rules, women are unable to progress in his structure (Kyte, 1996; Woods, 1996).

There are many other criticisms and critiques of Kohlberg's theory based upon the limitations and the restrictions of his own structure and study, but it is certain that his influence and his contribution to the field of psychology, philosophy and also education are profound. Teachers of all ages would benefit from a basic review and understanding of Kohlberg's stages and also his suggestions in order to frame discussions and activities in order to help students develop and enhance their own reasoning skills.

Stage One

April 12, 1935

Hi Journal,

How is everything going with you? School was good ~~there~~ this week and I'm having a wonderful time in Ms Johnson's class. Today, she told us this story and then asked us how we felt about it. Basically, it was about a ship hit an iceberg about 100 years ago. So, there about 30 survivors and they were crowded into a lifeboat that was meant to fit 7! The storm was getting worse and worse and the captain, who also survived, realized that probably no one on the life boat would even make it because it was so heavy. He was feeling really ~~responsible~~ in charge of everyone and was trying to decide what to do. To make the boat lighter, they would have to have less people on the boat, and the only place to put them would be the overboard. He thought, and thought about it and realized that for anyone to be saved, they would have to row to safety, and that would be hard. I once was in a row boat for an hour and my arms were ~~exhausted tired~~ really tired!

So, ~~she told us the captain~~ the captain decided to sacrifice the weakest people on the boat and the stronger ones were able to row to safety. BUT.... when they were rescued, the captain was arrested and was going to be tried for murdering those people.

Of course he should have been sent to jail because what he did was wrong. He killed people! That is not the right thing to do! If you hurt someone you will have to go to jail for it, it isn't allowed. My parents always tell me that I have to be nice or else I will get into trouble and I don't think that what that captain did was nice. He should not have killed those people. And since he did, he deserves to be taken in by the fuzz.

Anyway, that's just what I think. . . I have to go do some homework now and I'll write more later!

Lawrence

Daily Sun News

Tuesday, April 7, 1987- Page 2A

KOHLBERG BODY FOUND

By Elise N. Tortora

For the Daily Sun

Boston- Yesterday, April 6, the body of Lawrence Kohlberg, renowned psychologist and theorist, was found in the Boston Harbor. The body was found at 12:30 pm by a state trooper and it had washed ashore. Kohlberg was later identified by dental records and medical examiners believe that the cause of death was drowning, and they did not see any evidence of foul play. Kohlberg, 59, a professor of Education at Harvard University, had been missing since January 17.

Professor Kohlberg was born in 1927 in Bronxville, New York and attended the private high school, Andover Academy in Massachusetts. After graduating from high school, Kohlberg decided to dedicate himself to the Israeli cause and became a Second Engineer on a freighter which was helping smuggle Jewish refugees to safety through a British Blockade from Europe to Palestine. Certainly, during this post WWII time, while Kohlberg worked on the ship and through his daily activities and experiences he began to think about moral reasoning and its process in humans, both young and old. His focus on understanding injustices, which was most likely influenced by these earlier years, led to his future work in moral development.



When he returned to the United States, in 1948, Kohlberg enrolled in the University of Chicago. However, since he scored so high on the admissions test, it only took him one year to complete the few courses that he was required to take in order to earn his bachelor's degree. Kohlberg continued his education at the University of Chicago and in 1958 presented his doctoral dissertation which was the beginning of his new version of the stage theory, which was based on earlier work by Jean Piaget.

His dissertation set the ground work for the entire field of moral psychology and his continued research on the subject of cognitive development theory is still referenced today. His stage theory was based upon the three stage theory presented by Piaget however; he adjusted the first three stages and then continued to add three more of his own. He believed that children and adults progress through these stages, not simply because of age, but as a result of experiencing moral dilemmas. By experiencing these dilemmas, then people are given the chance to progress through the stages. Kohlberg used the "Heinz Dilemma" to measure the levels of his subjects in his studies and then classified them into stages based on their explanations and opinions.

Critics, and perhaps the most notable of them all, Kohlberg's own student, Carol Gilligan, have pointed out drawbacks and limitations of Kohlberg's work as all of the subjects in the studies were males. Gilligan

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2B

Daily Sun News

Tuesday, April 7, 1987- Page 2B

KOHLBERG BODY FOUND- Cont'd

believes that is because of this factor, that most women can only reach the third stage in moral development.

Despite criticism, Kohlberg's work was revolutionary for its time and it questioned mainstream psychology, sociology, and philosophy. His work marked the beginning of concrete research based upon the moral decisions and thought processes in which people experience.

In his personal life, Kohlberg was known as a true scholar and a passionate reader. He is survived by 2 sons, his sister and his mother.

Crain, W.C. (1985) *Theories of Development*. Retrieved from <http://faculty.plts.edu/gpence/html/kohlberg.htm>

Obituary (1987, April 8). Lawrence Kohlberg is Dead. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/1987/04/08/obituaries/lawrence-kohlberg-is-dead.html?pagewanted=1>

Kohlberg Image. February 10, 2010, from : http://relong.myweb.uga.edu/index_files/image002.jpg

Lawrence Kohlberg: Moral Development. Retrieved February 10, 2010, from North Carolina State University, College of Education website: <http://ced.ncsu.edu/hyy/8thgrade.htm>

Woods. C. (1996). Gender Differences in Moral Development and Acquisition: A Review of Kohlberg's and Gilligan's Models of Justice and Care. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal*, 24(4), 375.

Stage Two

October 14, 1938

Hi-ga Diary,

It's starting to get cold and now that we are going into the first few weeks of Fall, I'm so happy to see the changes happening everywhere around me. Fifth grade is much better than fourth grade, just to let you know. We are learning much more here and I think that Ms Thompson is a very good teacher as well. She is having us read in the newspaper or listen to the radio and then we have to come in to class to report our news event.

Today, I reported mine. Last week, a man was arrested because he went into a bank and tried to hold it up. He brought in a gun and told the people at the bank to give them all of the money. He was arrested and now is in jail, and he is going to go on trial soon. But, I don't think that he should be in jail. He was trying to get the money because his daughter needs to have a very important surgery, and he lost his job last year, so now he doesn't have enough money. They were charging so much money to complete the surgery, so that is what he had to do!

Obviously, he thought that this was the right thing to do, and really the only thing to do because he wants his daughter to live. But, on the other hand, I understand why the bank didn't like it, because the bank doesn't care about that man and his family. If he didn't get caught this could have worked out better. Maybe he should have broken into a store or the bank at night and then it would have been better, because he wouldn't have gotten caught.

In a way, you might even say that the hospital is to blame for all of this! If they allowed the surgery to happen for less money, then the man never would have had to go into the bank with the gun.

I'll keep you updated on what happens in the trial. I'll write more later!

Lawrence

A comic strip: Kohlberg's Days in the Principal's Office



This comic strip was made using Make Belief Comix. The original can be found at:

http://www.makebeliefscomix.com/Comix/?comix_id=6014091C205668

Stage Three

Dear Diary,

January 9, 1942

I listened to President Roosevelt's State of the Union Address this week and it got me thinking. He said that the United States will continue to support the British and continue to offer aid and help in the war effort. I heard that something called the United Nations was also created. This entire war thing is difficult for me. It has made me start to think and I've also been rereading my journal.

I was looking back at an entry that I made when I was 11, back in 1938! Wow! That was a long time ago! I wrote about this newspaper article, about a man who robbed a bank. The more I read it and think about it, the more I think that I was partially wrong in my response.

As I think about it, there is no real right situation or decision. Yes, it was wrong that he tried to rob the bank and yes there is some explanation to what he did, but the more important thing to focus on was why he did it. He did it because he cared about his daughter and when you look at the basic truth of it, although his actions were bad, his intentions were good. I know that I would have done the same thing that he did, if I were in his situation. He was not doing it for himself, but he was doing it for his daughter. So, really, he wasn't being selfish, but the hospital was being selfish. He was a good person who was willing to sacrifice himself for his daughter and I dig that.

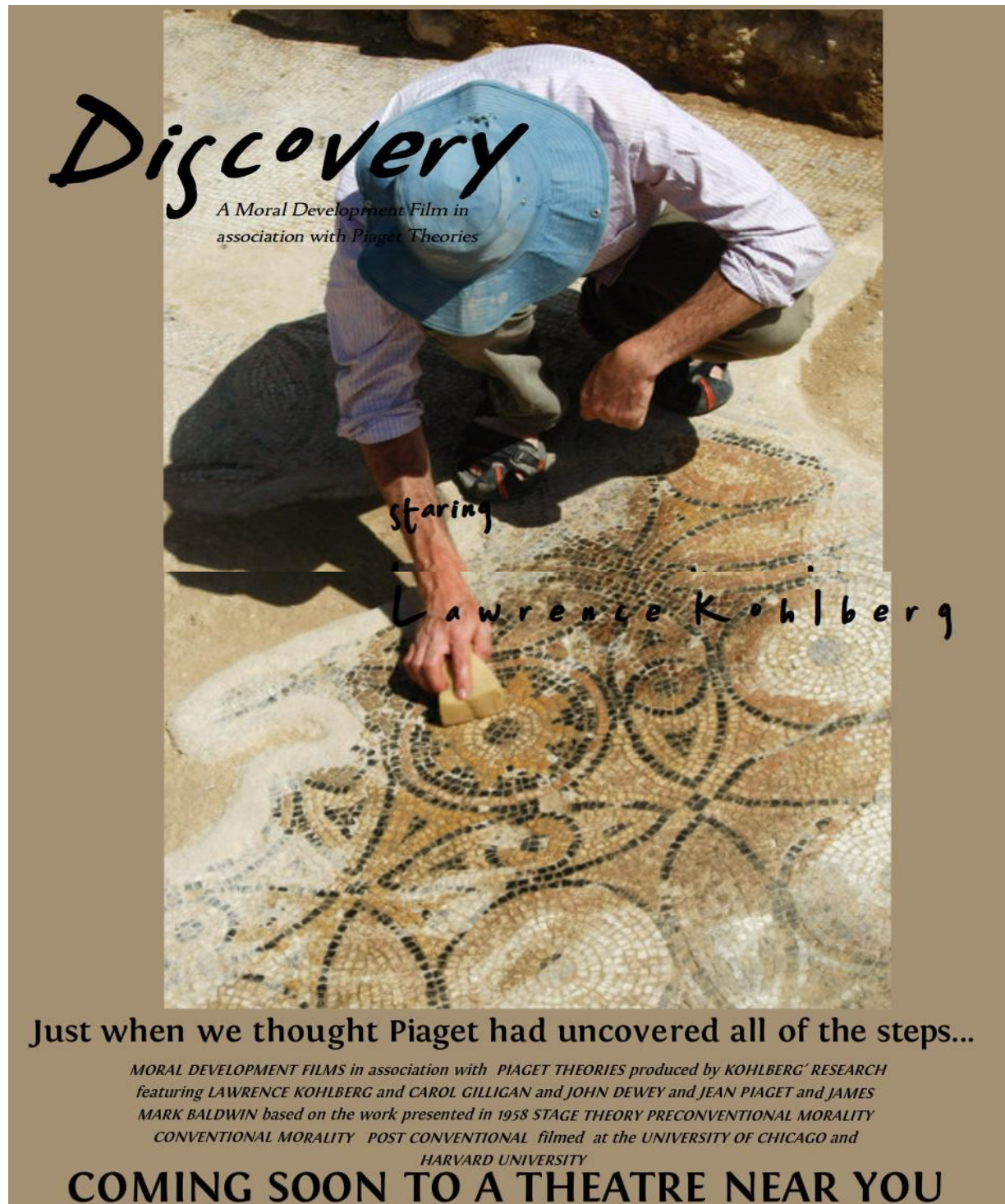
As we get older, I think we begin to see the differences in our decisions. I know that I have grown, learned and matured as I have also physically grown but that is because of the situations in life that I have experienced. If I never had to think about any of these situations, I would not be able to learn from them and consequently I would not be able to grow from them.

Anyway, enough of that, I'm off to the winter dance tonight...Wish me luck!

Lawrence

P.S.: I love my new typewriter!

Movie Poster: Discovery



This poster was made by using Glogster. To view full version: <http://glogsterid.glogster.com/kohlberg/> Image Citation:
<http://www.zimnio.com/pivyyutrd/x5rnY9Fi6hY/Archaeologists+Reveal+Byzantine+Church>

Stage Four

April 13, 1945

Dear Diary,

I am sorry I haven't written in a while, but I have been busy with my school work. I will be graduating next month from Andover, and I am unsure as to what I want to do. I feel like I need to do more. See more places. Do something beyond myself. I cannot simply think about just "Lawrence" with every decision I make, we need to start thinking about society as a whole.

Today, President Roosevelt died yesterday and although it saddens me that he has passed, it is important that our new president, Harry Truman, acts quickly to regain control. The entire war troubles me greatly, there seems to be little focus on laws and order and "rightness" in the world today. Without that, we seem to have chaos.

Speaking of chaos, I was just recently reading about some of the events that occurred following the Great Crash in 1929. There were so many people who were out of work and suffering. Thousands of people were out of work and needed jobs and food. I don't remember it very well, since I was so young, but I can understand that. I was reading about the gangsters and also some simpler crimes that occurred. People would break into stores and steal; there were riots, fighting and murders. However, for me, I cannot justify this type of activity. What they were doing was wrong and in order for us to maintain that orderly and chaos-free society that I mentioned before, we have to maintain a social order.

Can you imagine how terrifying and confusing it would be if we just broke the laws whenever we felt like it or even whenever we felt like we had a good reason? We are members of a society therefore we must abide by the rules of this society and follow them to keep the peace.

I'm sorry that I don't have anything light to talk about today, but it has been a difficult week for me and for the country. Wouldn't it be grand if everyone thought as clearly as I do?

Goodnight,

Lawrence

A poem: ...The stages of our life...

Some use firsts to mark them,
With words, steps and food,
Teeth, diplomas, love, and money,
And all that that they include.

But, don't you remember the age old adage,
The one about the book and cover?
With that in mind, let's open one up,
And see what we'll discover.

Why not look as Larry does,
And mark them by our mind.
For it is the thing we use to decide,
And judge about mankind.

These stages are not absolute,
Nor written in hard stone,
Some of us will pass a few,
some'll end up on their own.

He starts us off in our moral views, looking at the basics.
Absolutes, obedience and rules,
Children no not why,
But those who don't follow are simply, fools.

His second stage of our growth,
Is marked by reciprocation.
Looking out for number one,
Is often their vocation.

Stage three is marked by others,
A recognition of more than me.

But still they often want the “good kid” rep,
To be handed out by society.

The fourth stage seeks peace, authority.
When asked by Larry, as a whole,
They disagree with Heinz’s theft,
Since social order is the goal.

Idyllic states are now apparent,
Into stage five you freely enter,
With the ability to adjust, and tweak
In the social contract all rights are center.

In the final stage, few will reach,
Moral obligations are prime,
The goal, despite the outcome,
Those who do, are remembered for all time.

So take a moment and begin to ponder
Where should you be?
Will you stay back in the early stages,
Or be remembered in history?



http://gfxsitedevelopment.com/images/staircases/staircases_stone_1.JPG

Stage Five

June 1947 (not sure what day it is)

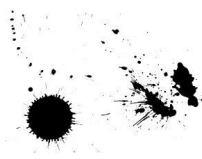
Dear Diary,

I am still out at sea, but now I have become the Second Engineer of our freighter. It is a great deal of responsibility but I also believe that it is the right, and morally just thing to do. I am not in favor of breaking laws and I realize that we are defying the British in what we are doing here. That is clear and that is certain, but, in these situations, in order to have a good society, the rational and proper thing is to think beyond the law at this point.

We must question what we value. I value life and I think that our society must value it as well. Property and even the rules set forth by our or other governments, in situations such as these, must be broken in order to maintain the value of our people. I believe that there are two main points that must be remembered, 1: we all want basic rights and we all should be allowed access to them, such as life and liberty 2: we must have certain democratic procedures in place in order to adjust any laws or rules which are restricting our basic rights.

Presently, we cannot change the blockade, but in time, it will be changed. As a result, we will do what we must in order to help these people maintain their basic rights to life and liberty. They should be able to go to their homelands if they wish, and we will help make it so.

Lawrence



Works Cited

Crain, W.C. (1985). *Theories of Development*. Retrieved from
<http://faculty.plts.edu/gpence/html/kohlberg.htm>

Kyte, R. (1996). *Moral reasoning as perception: A reading of Carol Gilligan*. *Hypatia*, 11(3), 97.
<http://search.ebscohost.com/www.lib.ncsu.edu:2048>

Kohlberg, L., & Hersh, R. (1977). Moral Development: A Review of the Theory. *Theory Into Practice*, 16(2), 53.

Kohlberg, L. (2008). The Development of Children's Orientations Toward a Moral Order. *Human Development* (0018716X), 51(1), 8-20.(Reprinted from *Vita Humana*, 1963;6:11-33)

Kohlberg Image. February 10, 2010, from :
http://relog.myweb.uga.edu/index_files/image002.jpg

Lawrence Kohlberg: Moral Development. Retrieved February 10, 2010, from North Carolina State University, College of Education website: <http://ced.ncsu.edu/hyy/8thgrade.htm>

Obituary (1987, April 8). Lawrence Kohlberg is Dead. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from
<http://www.nytimes.com/1987/04/08/obituaries/lawrence-kohlberg-is-dead.html?pagewanted=1>

Some Moral Dilemmas; Adapted from Moral Reasoning, by Victor Grassian (Prentice Hall, 1981, 1992). Retrieved February 4, 2010, from
<http://www.friesian.com/valley/dilemmas.htm>

Woods. C. (1996). Gender Differences in Moral Development and Acquisition: A Review of Kohlberg's and Gilligan's Models of Justice and Care. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal*, 24(4), 375.